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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

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SUBJECT: WB/G SITREP: JUNE 28, 2005 (1800 HOURS LOCAL) --
PALESTINIAN MILITANTS LAUNCH MORTAR ATTACKS IN GAZA; IDF
CONVICTS SOLDIER IN DEATH OF UK PEACE ACTIVIST

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: Palestinian militants launched a total of six mortar shells and one Qassam rocket from the southern Gaza Strip. Erez Crossing was open June 27, and 4,200 laborers and 405 merchants crossed into Israel. An IDF military court has convicted a former IDF soldier of manslaughter, obstruction of justice and perjury in the death of UK peace activist Tom Hurndall. The PA cabinet met in Gaza on June 27 and discussed a number of steps that will be implemented to control the security situation. END SUMMARY.

West Bank

2. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Arrests: Palestinian media reported that the IDF arrested three Palestinian minors who were carrying firebombs and a knife.

-- Arrests: According to Palestinian sources, three Palestinians were hit with rubber-coated bullets and a fourth was arrested during a protest against the building of the security barrier in the village of Yatta, south of Hebron, on June 27.

-- Attacks: Shots were fired at an IDF outpost outside the settlement of Kadim, near Jenin, on June 27. The IDF did not retaliate, while PA police combed the eastern section of the city from which the shots were fired. No arrests were reported.

3. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- PA President Abbas met with heads of the PLC committees and discussed the introduction of a PA vice president position. No decision was made during the meeting, but public statements by the leadership supported the idea. The Fatah Central Committee (FCC) will discuss the idea when it meets in Amman on June 30.

GAZA

4. (SBU) ATTACKS:

-- Deaths: Nil.

-- Injuries: Nil.

-- Mortars/Rockets/Shootings: The IDF reported that Palestinian militants fired a total of six mortar shells and one Qassam rocket, and launched three shooting attacks in the southern Gaza Strip overnight June 27-28. No injuries were reported in any of these attacks.

-- Tunnels: The IDF on June 26 discovered a tunnel between Khan Yunis and Neve Dekalim. According to the IDF, a PIJ cell based in Khan Yunis dug the tunnel.

5. (SBU) BORDER CROSSINGS:

-- Route Four (Salahadeen Road), the main north-south traffic artery, was closed at Abu Khouli June 28.

-- Erez Crossing was open June 27, and 4,200 laborers and 405 merchants crossed into Israel. As of June 26, female PA security officers are assigned to the crossing to search female Palestinians seeking to cross into Israel.

-- The Erez Industrial Zone was open June 27, and 553 laborers entered.

-- Sufa Crossing was closed for Palestinian laborers June 28, but was open for the import of aggregates used in construction.

-- Karni Terminal was open June 28.

-- Rafah was open June 28 for both arrivals and departures.

-- Tel al-Sultan checkpoint was closed June 22. Toufah checkpoint was open for residents of al-Mowassi, except males aged 16-30.

16. (SBU) POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

-- UNRWA reported that some 1,300 PIJ supporters, including some 300 masked and armed men, protested in Nuseirat camp the evening of June 27.

-- According to Israeli media, an IDF military court on June 27 convicted a former IDF soldier of manslaughter, obstruction of justice and perjury in the death of UK peace activist Tom Hurndall. Hurndall, a member of the International Solidarity Movement (ISM), was shot in 2003 while escorting children from an area of IDF and militant activity. In a coma for the next 18 months, Hurndall died in January 2004.

-- The Palestinian media reported that the PA cabinet met in Gaza on June 28 and discussed a number of steps that will be implemented to control the security situation.

PEARCE